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Pet Stress Away- Using Dogs to Help Students Cope with Stress

Madison Beck

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Maura Buckley

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Sarah Wakumoto

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Pet Stress Away

Using Dogs to Help Students Cope with Stress

Madison Beck (MGE), Maura Buckley (ME), Sarah Wakumoto (CHE)

Advisors: Professor Joseph Beck and Professor Robert Traver

Problem

College students are under stress. Without healthy coping strategies, stress can lead to undesirable consequences. Colleges offer programs to help, but many are underutilized .

Background

- 85% of college students report feeling stress on a daily basis¹
- Just petting a dog has been proven to reduce blood pressure and pulse and alleviate stress²

Assessment Plan

Induce Stress

Take Quiz

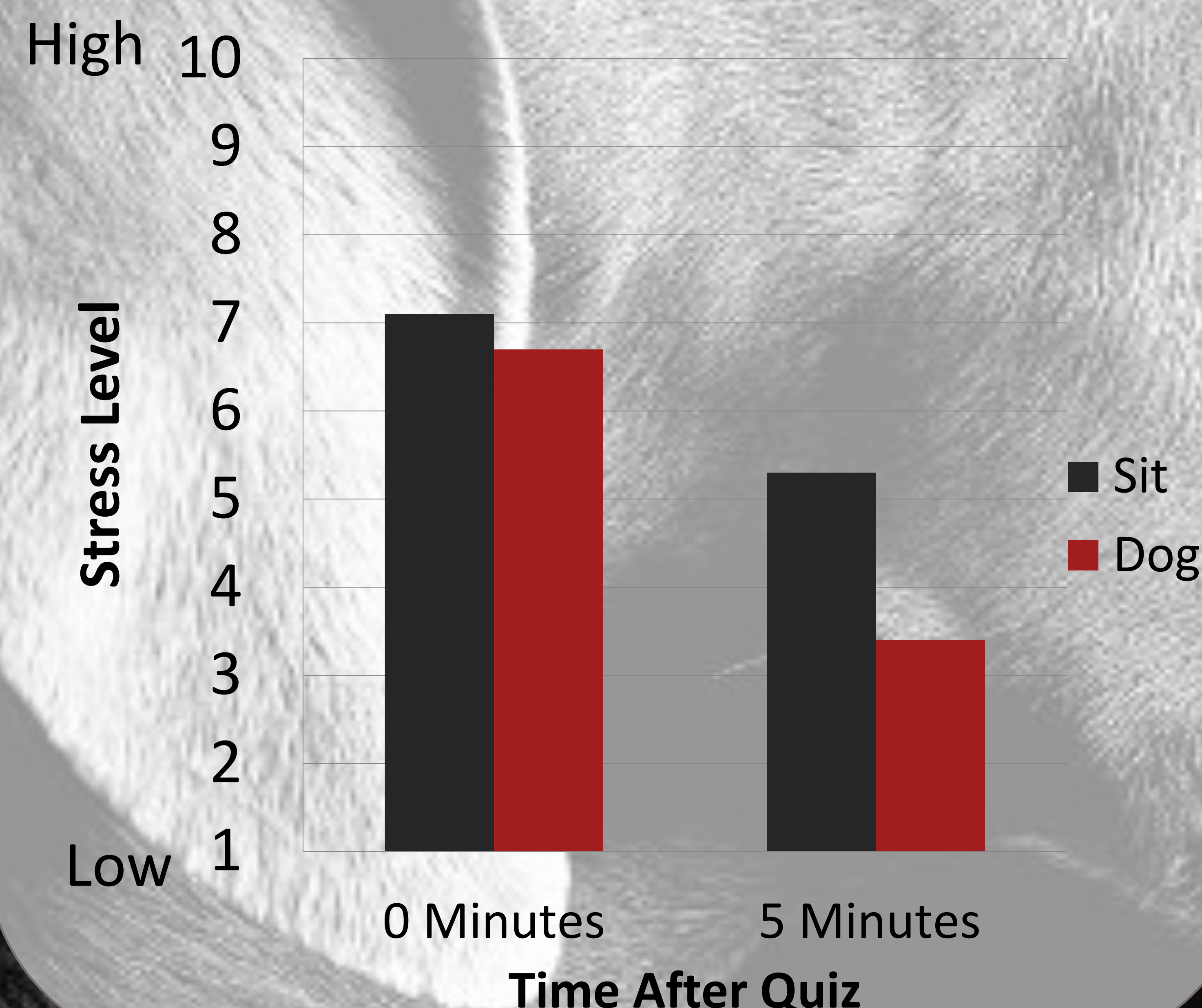
Relieve Stress

Sit

Pet Dog

Students reported stress on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) after each step.

Reduction of Student Stress Levels



References

1. "College Stress and Mental Health Poll". March 2009. mtvU/Associated Press.
2. Hansen, K., Messinger, C., Baun, M., & Megel, M. (1999). Companion Animals Alleviating Distress in Children.

Results and Recommendations

Petting dogs reduced stress levels twice as much as sitting. Colleges should provide access to dogs to enable students to relieve stress in a healthy way.

Cost - Benefit

Little to no monetary cost

Fun and healthy way to relieve stress

Institutionalizes a new program at WPI

Long-Term Outcome

The student club PAWS (Promotion of Animal Welfare Society) will use our project to institutionalize a therapy dog program at WPI.

Acknowledgements

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